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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
.09/536,315	03/27/2000	Eiji Ogawa	Q55898	4621
7590	12/19/2003		EXAMINER	
			HARTMAN JR, RONALD D	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2121	
DATE MAILED: 12/19/2003				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/536,315	OGAWA, EIJI	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Ronald D Hartman Jr.	2127	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 September 2003.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-33 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-33 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
 - a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ . |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ . |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is in response to the Amendment filed on 9/22/2003.
2. Claims 1, 3 and 14 have been amended.
3. Claims 26-33 have been added.
4. Therefore, claims 1-33 are presented for further examination.

Claim Objections

5. Claim 13 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form. All of the features claimed by claim 13 is disclosed in claim 2, respectively, and therefore these claims do not further limit or define a parent claim from which they depend.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 1-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jenkins et al., U.S Patent No. 5,365,310, in view of Hoebel et al., U.S Patent No. 5,400,792.

8. As per claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 13-15 and 18, Jenkins teaches a system comprising:

- a plurality of image input/output devices holding respective histories, of evaluation results, on specified items regarding image quality of individual image input device (e.g. "copy quality defect"; C3 L54-55 and C6 L24-37);
- a control device, which stores all of the histories of said evaluation results regarding the image quality, which respective image input/output devices hold, to control the histories thereof centrally (e.g. Figure 1 element 60); and
- a network onto which said plurality of image input/output devices and said control device are connected (e.g. RIC network; Abstract and C2 L12-60).

In other words, Jenkins teaches a networked system of imaging devices, wherein the imaging devices store data regarding their respective devices image quality, and the devices communicate with a control device, which also stores the data, so that the image quality of the devices can be controlled using the data.

9. As per claims 1-4, 14-15 and 18, Jenkins does not specifically teach the image input devices specifically being medical image input devices or the imaging device

being at least one medical input image device and at least one medical image output device.

In other words, although Jenkins discloses the use of an image quality control system in a networked imaging system environment, Jenkins does not specifically disclose the use of a networked *medical* imaging system environment for controlling image quality, using a control device.

Hoebel teaches a networked medical diagnostic installation wherein an apparatus, such as an angiography apparatus, may be controlled from a central work station (Figure 1, elements "network", "central work station" and "angiography apparatus"). Hoebel teaches that the angiography apparatus or image input apparatus also possessing the functionality of an image output apparatus by incorporating a display device (Figure 1 element 11). Hoebel also teaches that image quality may be coordinated at one central location (Abstract).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have allowed for Hoebel's medical diagnostic apparatus to be incorporated into the teachings of Jenkins since it would allow for a more effective way of controlling image quality by providing for a central control means to automatically monitor and control aspects of the imaging system or apparatus so that an operator or service technician need not be located at the facility where the image apparatus is physically located.

10. As per claims 6 and 8, Jenkins teaches a soft copy display device (e.g. Figure 1 element 11).

11. As per claims 9-10 and 17, Jenkins teaches the system further comprising a portable testing unit for performing an image quality check (e.g. C3 L3-8 and C8 L3-10).

12. As per claims 11-12 and 16, although Jenkins does not specifically teach features whereby one of the image input devices is used as the central control device, or the image devices immediately outputting history results of evaluation results after determining the history, they are both features that are obvious for at least the following reasons.

Firstly, the use of computer networks is well known for providing computing devices the ability to communicate with another, and since allowing one of the imaging devices to also function as the control device would form a more simple control system but eliminating the need for use of an external communication network (e.g. telephone, cable, etc.) which may suffer from disruptions that cannot be alleviated internally by an operator of the quality control system. If one of the imaging devices co-functioned as the control device this type of possible disruption would be conveniently and cheaply avoided.

Secondly, as previously discussed with regards to claims 14 and 18 above, since providing the most relevant data, regarding image quality, would obviously form a more effective means of providing overall image quality control, since decisions are made

from data pertaining to the images, obviously the most relevant information about these images is necessary in order to effectively control the image quality of the overall imaging system.

Therefore, for at least the aforementioned reasons, the features or limitations of pending claims 11-12 and 16 would obviously be incorporated into Jenkins, and this would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made.

13. As per claims 14 and 18, automatically outputting information related to image quality from one of the devices is a feature that would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art since providing the central control means with the most up date information, from which control decisions are made, would result in a more effective quality control system. Therefore, the incorporation of this feature into Jenkins combined system would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made.

14. As per claims 19-23, although Jenkins combined system does not specifically teach the specific image qualities claimed by way of pending claims 19-23, they are all believed to be obvious known quantitative measurement means by which images are analyzed to determine deficiencies in the images. Therefore, since Jenkins is directed towards a system whereby image quality can be managed from a host computer, or via a portable computing means, and since all of the claimed feature of pending claims 19-

23 present known qualitative means for image analysis, the incorporation of these features into Jenkins would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made since they are all features that would aid in the determination of corrective measures to be implemented on the imaging devices.

15. As per claims 24-25 and 31-33, although Jenkins combined system teaches the use of an angiography apparatus or imaging device, Jenkins combined system does not specifically teach the system being applied to specifically to a computerized radiography (CR) imagining system or other known x-ray imaging system. However, since Jenkins combined system using an angiography imaging apparatus, a known x-ray medical imaging apparatus, the use of a computerized radiography imaging system is believed to be an obvious variation of Jenkins combined system. That is, since both imaging systems serve the same purpose, that is, taking x-rays and digitally converting these images so that determinations may be made, these determinations affecting decisions that effectuate subsequent operations of the imaging system, their incorporation into one another would be obvious since they are, in essence, from analogous art and the CR feature would merely provide other well known imaging systems that would provide adequate diagnostic capabilities (x-rays) for implementing Jenkins combined system. Therefore, for at least the following aforementioned reasons, the incorporation of this feature into Jenkins combined system would have been obvious tone of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made.

16. As per claims 26-28, the image input devices originates an image from a source being imaged using energy conversion to an electrical signal is inherent to the teachings of Jenkins and his disclosed use of digital imaging systems since digital image signals (electrical signals) are inherently formed using any digital reprographic image device.

17. As per claims 29-30, Jenkins teaches the imaging devices having a memory and the automatic output of image quality information (C3 L54-55 and C8 L42-45).

Conclusion

18. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ronald D. Hartman Jr. whose telephone number is (703) 308-7001. The examiner works Mon. – Fri., 10:30 am – 8:30 pm EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, William Grant can be reached at (703) 308-7001

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-9618.

Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

Or faxed to:

(703) 872-9306 (central fax location number)

Hand delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park II, 2121 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA., Sixth Floor (Receptionist).

Ronald D. Hartman Jr.
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 2121
December 15, 2003

W.G.
WILLIAM GRANT
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
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12/15/03